

## **Minutes**

Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, September 8, 2015

1-3 pm

Congregation Beth Shalom

1801 Baynard Boulevard

Wilmington, DE, 19802

Attendees: Doug Gerdts, Jen Hill, Michael Beals, Kenny Foster, Raina Harper Allen, John Moore, Flora McConkie, Jeanne Cashman, Max Wolf.

Following a shofar welcome by Michael, Doug called meeting to order at approx. 1:15 pm.

Minutes of May meeting approved.

**Finance Update.** The Council received a \$3800 donation from Usman Sandhu in September 2014. Expenditures include 2014 DEMA workshop (\$146.85); April 2015 Lunch and Learn (\$290.00); May 2015 Lunch and Learn (\$255.00). Total spent: \$691.85. Available funds: \$3108.15. Funds are handled through Doug/First and Central Presbyterian Church.

**Upcoming “Lunch and Learn” Events.** Flora coordinating with DEMA (Oct.) and Jay Lynch (Nov.). Draft invitation reviewed. Awaiting confirmation on location before finalizing. Finalized invitation will be emailed to Council for distribution. (See dates, locations and topics below.)

**New Council Members.** Pramod (Paul) Mather, who offered a prayer (Hindu) at the Governor’s Prayer Breakfast; and Rich Walton, Methodist minister who is active in emergency preparedness, have been invited to apply. Council would like to broaden future applicants to include additional females and faiths (Sikh, for instance), members of the Hispanic community, and increased geographic diversity. Flora to follow up with Mr. Mather and Mr. Walton, and with Governor’s Boards and Commissions office.

**Update on Leadership (Secretary).** Flora announced her retirement as secretary on the Council, effective December 1, 2015. She would like to continue serving as a member of the Council, but increased obligations with family and with the opening of her faith’s Philadelphia Temple next year will not allow time for service as secretary. Appreciation for her service was expressed.

Raina suggested utilizing an intern to fill role of secretary. Raina to pursue the possibility with Dr. Adrienne Bey, Program Chair, Wilmington University’s Administration of Human Services. Ideally, intern would begin in January or February 2016. To fulfill education requirement, would need about 120 hours over 5 month period. Flora to create job description for role. Doug offered to provide office space once a week for the intern’s use and he will act as supervisor. Intern would likely change each semester.

**Discussion on Vision for Future.** Council reflected on overview of activities since Council was created: members appointed, officers elected, by-laws created, regular meetings at various houses of worship and state agencies, four areas of focus selected, support of foster care initiative, support of faith leader survey on public health emergency preparedness, last year's emergency preparedness and response workshop (which Governor visited and mentioned in his weekly message), "Lunch and Learn" events this year, etc.

Council is carefully gauging interest and involvement level, particularly with a transition in Governor's office approaching (January 2017).

For next year, continue with "Lunch and Learn" format, increasing topics, to possibly include: trauma-informed care with Dr. Leslie Brower (who presented at second meeting of Council), violence prevention program at Christiana Hospital (suggested by John), State Office of Volunteerism (suggested by Flora), interfaith town hall-style meeting on violence prevention/peace (suggested by Jeanne and others) or interfaith fair or festival of peace, grant writing (suggested by Max), interfaith children's festival (suggested by Flora), meeting with News Journal editor and publisher (suggested by Flora), Zones of Peace (modeled after Philadelphia's Interfaith Center, suggested by Flora).

The Governor's office is receiving more frequent calls on issues related to police and communities. Council/faith leaders could play role in developing relationships of trust between police and communities. Council members deeply concerned with violence in state. Consider changing/updating areas of focus. Raina noted there were positive results in Wilmington with "Operation Disrupt" (boots on the ground).

Foster care and after-school programs have not received as much attention as emergency preparedness/response and re-entry, recidivism, incarceration issues. School mentoring programs could be encouraged. Challenges to faith communities bringing programs into schools expressed. Mas reminded Council that Governor specifically mentioned youth and after-school programs when meeting with Council.

Raina suggested Susan A. Cycyk as a presenter on how faith communities might approach after-school programs. Ms. Cycyk is Director of the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services (DPBHS), part of the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families.

Tour of prison vocational program (which has been scheduled and cancelled twice) to be reconsidered as a broader faith leader tour. Flora to inquire regarding the possibility. Those who attended presentation on I-ADAPT may be particularly interested.

Encouragement from Michael to have more collaboration with high levels of government, to be a "think tank" to state, providing a faith perspective to government, to be more utilized by elected officials – increased relationship between government leaders and faith leaders – with faith leaders providing guidance on issues. Jen suggested submitting a proposal on the "think tank" approach to the Governor's office.

Council members could be present at community events, representing Council in official capacity.

Decision to host six “Lunch and Learn” events next year, three in spring and three in fall. Topics of particular interest: interfaith town hall on peace/violence prevention, an effort to start a conversation in a meaningful way with members of faith communities; after-school programs, with Susan Cycyk; violence prevention program at Christiana Hospital; meeting with News Journal leadership; trauma-informed care with Dr. Brower.

Decision to request meeting with the Governor. Doug will inquire regarding October. Flora to update Council Overview beforehand.

Next meeting. Tuesday, October 6, 2015 at Delaware Emergency Management Agency in Smyrna.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 3:00 pm.

Submitted by Flora McConkie, DCFBP Secretary, October 1, 2015.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

Tuesday, October 6, 2015

“Lunch and Learn” on Emergency Preparedness/Response, followed by Council meeting, Delaware Emergency Management Agency in Smyrna, 12-2 pm.

Tuesday, November 3, 2015

“Lunch and Learn” on I-ADAPT, followed by Council meeting, DHSS/DDDS Fox Run in Bear, 12-2 pm.

No meeting in December.